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Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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Summary of the conclusions of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination at its second regular session of 2004

United Nations Headquarters, New York
29 and 30 October 2004

Summary: conclusions of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination requiring specific follow-up

Programme matters

The Chairman of the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) briefed the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) on the work of the Committee at its eighth session, held in Florence, Italy, from 15 to 17 September 2004. **CEB noted that HLCP was preparing for an in-depth discussion in the CEB session, to be held next year, on two critical issues: conflict prevention and the system's response to the New Partnership for Africa's Development. CEB noted with appreciation the strong leadership that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had provided to the Committee, as well as the innovation and energy they had brought to inter-agency collaboration. It approved by acclamation the extension of the tenure of the Chairman, Lennart Båge, and the Vice-Chairman, Mats Karlsson, for a further two-year term.**

2005 review of the United Nations Millennium Declaration: the response of the United Nations system

Executive Heads shared with the Secretary-General their views on the key themes and messages that should be given prominence in the Secretary-General's report for the 2005 high-level meeting, focusing on their assessment of progress in implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration and how this should be projected in the report; the key conditions for future progress in implementing the Declaration that the report should highlight; and how the report might best convey the contribution of the system to the implementation of the Declaration and the system's vision of the way ahead.

CEB members underscored the enormous political importance of the 2005 high-level event. The opportunity it offered the United Nations system to help shape its outcome should not be missed. HLCP was invited to continue its work on the accountability report, as well as to pursue discussions on the proposal of the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

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CEB decided to continue discussions on the focus and priorities of the Secretary-General's report for the 2005 event in the context of the private meeting and revert to issues relating to the review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration at its next session.

Information technology: coordinating the policy advice provided to countries and strengthening knowledge management within the system

The President of the World Bank shared with Executive Heads the experience of the World Bank in knowledge management. The Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) provided an update on preparations for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held in Tunisia from 16 to 18 November 2005.

CEB thanked the President of the World Bank for his offer to assist the United Nations in developing an appropriate paradigm for knowledge management and sharing.

CEB endorsed the recommendations before it as follows:

- **HLCP, in close consultation with the High-level Summit Organizing Committee for the World Summit on the Information Society (HLSOC), should undertake a work programme for mainstreaming and integrating information and communications technology (ICT) into the broader Millennium Development Goals agenda, including through the development of system-wide approaches and guidelines for use by country representatives and by the resident coordinator system; and, working closely with the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) and the ICT network, to focus on developing a clear vision of a United Nations system-wide knowledge management system, its optimum functionality and implementation options.**
- **The United Nations system ICT strategy should be pursued as an essential component of the overall effort to enhance cost-effectiveness, strengthen system-wide knowledge management and enhance the capacity to support countries in using ICT for the achievement of the Goals. HLCM and the ICT network should work closely with HLCP to continue to develop the business cases for the strategy, its resource implications and measures to address constraints in its implementation for consideration and decision by CEB.**
- **CEB members recognize the significance of the information society agenda as a main tenet of the inter-agency work programme; the need to make greater use of new information and communication technologies in the working methods of the United Nations and the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as the importance of these technologies and of knowledge sharing as the main elements of development policies and as vital tools in achieving the Goals. They agreed to give priority to the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society Plan of Action of the Geneva phase, so that effective results can be reported in time for the second phase; support the involvement of the private sector and civil society in system-wide efforts to build the information society, including through their participation in the Summit process; revert to the reports of the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms and the Working Group on Internet Governance and study their implications for the United Nations system; and continue to assess the**

impact of new technologies on modern societies and the work of the United Nations system, and strengthen efforts to ensure policy coherence among agencies of the system, including, in particular in relation to measuring the digital divide and monitoring e-readiness.

Management matters

Staff security and safety

CEB welcomed the progress in the work of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network, the outcome of the 2004 census of United Nations system staff members and the situation of contingency planning and emergency preparedness in the organizations and bodies of the system.

Follow-up to the report of the Panel on the Strengthening of the International Civil Service

CEB members endorsed the conclusions of HLCM and decided to convey to the Commission their strong disappointment about the comment of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) on the panel's report and their expectation that the General Assembly would respond in a positive manner to the key recommendations of the Panel.

Dialogue with staff representatives and the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission

CEB heard statements from, and exchanged views with, the Chairman of ICSC and representatives of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA), on issues relating to the pay and benefits system, staff security and the review of ICSC.

CEB members welcomed the dialogue with staff and expressed their appreciation to FICSA and the Coordinating Committee of Independent Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA) for their continuing efforts to promote the interest and welfare of staff and strengthen their dialogue with CEB.

Other matters

Dates of the 2005 spring and fall sessions of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination

CEB confirmed 8 to 9 April as the dates for its spring 2005 session to be held in Geneva at the invitation of the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO). With regard to the dates of its fall 2005 session, it decided to consult further in the light of its decision to hold the session in the last week of October. CEB also took note of the offer of the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization to host the spring 2006 session of CEB in Madrid.

CEB paid tribute to Thomas Leavey, Director-General of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), whose term in office would end before the next session of the Board and Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) whose term in office ended prior to the current session of CEB.

I. Introduction

1. The second regular session of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2004 was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, on 29 and 30 October 2004.

2. A private meeting of CEB members, chaired by the Secretary-General, was held in the afternoon of 29 October at the Greentree Foundation in Long Island, New York.

3. CEB members held a retreat at the Greentree Foundation on the evening of 29 October and on 30 October, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, focusing on enhancing the effectiveness and coherence of the United Nations system's activities at the country level.

4. The present summary covers the outcome of the second regular session of CEB held at United Nations Headquarters.

Agenda

5. The agenda of the second regular session of CEB for 2004 was as follows:

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Programme matters:
   - (a) 2005 review of the United Nations Millennium Declaration: the response of the United Nations system;
   - (b) Information technology: coordinating the policy advice provided to countries and strengthening knowledge management within the system;
   - (c) Other matters addressed in the High-level Committee on Planning report.
3. Management matters:
   - (a) Staff security and safety;
   - (b) Follow-up to the report of the Panel on the Strengthening of the International Civil Service;
   - (c) Dialogue with staff representatives and the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC);
   - (d) Other matters covered in the High-level Committee on Management report.
4. Other matters:

   Dates of CEB 2005 spring and fall sessions.

6. The Secretary-General welcomed, on behalf of CEB, Rodrigo de Rato, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Louise Arbour, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who were participating in CEB for the first time.

II. Programme matters

7. The Chairman of the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) briefed CEB on the work of the Committee at its eighth session, held in Florence from 15 to 17 September 2004. He noted that the process of preparing an accountability report on the response of the system to the United Nations Millennium Declaration was serving to further advance the steady progress that the Committee was making in bringing organizations together, promoting synergies in the programme area and developing common perspectives on major policy issues facing the system.

8. One of the key messages contained in the annotated outline for that report was that the Millennium Declaration was instrumental in helping align the system to share knowledge, be fully accountable and to work with others for results. Another message was that the system was giving renewed attention to ensuring that the individual strengths of organizations were being brought to bear collectively to help countries take ownership of, and assume leadership in, implementing the Declaration.

9. On the basis of guidance provided by CEB, HLCP intended to continue working on the accountability report, as a contribution to the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, and eventually issue it as input for the preparations for the 2005 high-level meeting of the General Assembly, and develop it to reinforce, from a system-wide perspective, some of the messages in the Secretary-General's own report.

10. The Chairman further noted that, in preparing for consideration by CEB of the theme "information technology — coordinating the policy advice provided to countries and strengthening knowledge management within the system", the C. mittee had looked at both challenges and opportunities, recognizing the critical importance of ICT and knowledge management in enhancing the coherence and effectiveness of United Nations system support, in advancing the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The ICT strategy before CEB was an integral part of the effort to achieve greater system-wide coherence in this regard, thereby strengthening both cost-effectiveness and impact. HLCP would be pursuing the issue of knowledge management in its future work programme.

11. HLCP had also endeavoured to contribute to the preparations for the CEB retreat, focusing on tools and expertise, but also changes in mindsets that needed to be introduced to enhance the system's capacity to bring to bear its full contribution to the implementation of the development agenda at the country level.

12. The Chairman also informed CEB that HLCP was continuing to examine ways of engaging organizations more effectively and systematically in analytical work at the United Nations on conflict prevention. A key dimension was an examination of how the organizations could be more effectively engaged in the ongoing processes at the United Nations. The Chairman expected HLCP to bring to CEB at its spring 2005 session recommendations on further strengthening the system's collective contribution in this area.

13. The Chairman added that HLCP was giving special attention to ensuring systematic monitoring of the implementation of CEB decisions and conclusions, including as they related to transnational organized crime, under the committed leadership of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the follow-up to

the International Conference on Financing for Development. In the same context, the Committee intended to review measures to enhance the coherence and coordination of United Nations system support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). In addition, it expected to undertake in the coming year an assessment of its own programme and methods of work. The Chairman expected that the outcome of the 2005 summit of the General Assembly would be critical in guiding the orientation and content of the future work programmes of CEB and HLCP.

14. **The Board noted that HLCP was preparing for an in-depth discussion in the CEB, to be held next year, on two critical issues: conflict prevention and the system's response to NEPAD.**

15. **CEB noted with appreciation the strong leadership that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had provided to the Committee, as well as the innovation and energy they had brought to inter-agency collaboration. It approved by acclamation the extension of the tenure of the Chairman, Lennart Båge and the Vice-Chairman, Mats Karlsson, for a further two-year term.**

A. 2005 review of the United Nations Millennium Declaration: the response of the United Nations system

16. In his 2004 report to the General Assembly on progress in implementing the Millennium Declaration, the Secretary-General recalled that he had emphasized the need for the September high-level meeting to be more than a stock-taking exercise, but an occasion to mobilize the will and resources of the international community in pursuit of their historic "millennium enterprise".

17. The Secretary-General noted that two major inputs, those of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, and the Millennium Project will be available, respectively, in December 2004 and January 2005. He intended to issue his own report in March to give sufficient time for discussion among Member States and prepare the ground for a September event that would produce real decisions.

18. The 2005 report to the General Assembly would need to strike a balance between offering a sober assessment and providing a sense that real progress is possible. It would have to contend with the differences that persist among Member States on some of the fundamental principles regarding the maintenance of international peace and security, and even on perceptions of what constitutes a threat to peace and security, and would have to address the security and development agendas in both their respective merits and their linkages, and do so in such a way as to maximize the possibility of concrete and mutually reinforcing outcomes.

19. The Secretary-General noted that the annotated outline of the accountability report that HLCP was preparing as part of the CEB contribution to the preparatory process for the high-level meeting was highly relevant to the present CEB discussion. He expressed satisfaction that the preparatory process was already seeing the United Nations system come together, technically, conceptually and politically, in very promising ways. Such cooperation bodes well for the year ahead.

20. CEB was also briefed on proposals on organizational arrangements for the 2005 high-level meeting that will be presented shortly to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General. The proposed dates for the meeting would be from 14 to

16 September and the proposed format similar to that of the Millennium Summit in 2000. The proposals would also deal with the timing of the Assembly high-level dialogue on financing for development and suggest different options, including the possibility of holding it before the next session of the Economic and Social Council, in order for the outcome of the dialogue to make a timely contribution to the 2005 meeting. Expectations were high both with regard to the outcome and participation at the high-level meeting. For this reason, there was ground to think of the high-level meeting as a summit. The Executive Office of the Secretary-General will continue to work with CEB and HLCP to ensure that the issues brought to the high-level meeting draw on the views of the entire United Nations system.

21. In the ensuing discussion, Executive Heads shared with the Secretary-General their views on the key themes and messages that should be given prominence in the Secretary-General's report for the 2005 high-level meeting, focusing on their assessment of progress in implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration and how this should be projected in the report; the key conditions for future progress in implementing the Declaration that the report should highlight; and how the report might best convey the contribution of the system to the implementation of the Declaration and the system's vision of the way ahead.

22. Under this item, the Director General of United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) introduced a paper on renewing the role of the United Nations system in the field of economic development as a means of advancing the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the context of reviving support for multilateralism and revitalizing the United Nations system. Not only will a coherent and common agenda for action in economic development enable the United Nations system to enhance its contribution to the attainment of the Goals but it would also help strengthen the links between the system's approaches to economic development, on the one hand, and human development and post-conflict recovery, on the other. A common business plan, focusing on a select list of priority issues would also make it possible for the United Nations system to achieve critical mass, accumulate knowledge along common lines of thought, improve its capacity to price its technical cooperation activities and enhance its capacity to mobilize additional resources.

23. Points highlighted in the course of the discussion included the following:

(a) People's security as a cross-cutting goal should be placed at the forefront of the international community's concerns. The emphasis placed in the Millennium Declaration on the need for globalization to benefit all the world's people should find an important echo in the Secretary-General's report. A fair globalization process that creates opportunities for all is a source of security and global stability. The multilateral system should focus on ways to help bring this about and ensure that the notion of equity is also given the attention it deserves. Employment as the sustainable way out of poverty, and decent work as a development tool should be at the centre of these efforts. Attention should also be paid to the resource requirements and equally to the policy means that must be used to advance the common goals of the international community. The importance of advancing policy coherence and the system's contribution in this regard should be highlighted;

(b) A proper balance should be struck between realism and hope and between progress and challenges. The distinction that used to be drawn between economic and human development is artificial and no longer valid. New

developments should be highlighted, including the increasing importance of developing countries in the world economy, the emergence of rule-based international economic system and the way forward defined for such issues as international trade. Emphasis should be placed on the role of knowledge management to improve economic governance;

(c) While the United Nations system is supporting the implementation by countries of the Millennium Declaration, the requisite resources needed for such implementation and support should be provided. Attention should also be given to the changing requirements of the international community, taking into account the outcomes of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Furthermore, the role of science and technology should be given due emphasis;

(d) Assessment of progress in implementing the Millennium Declaration should be based on facts, not on concepts and theories. At the present rate of progress, the target of reducing by half the number of people who suffer from hunger can only be achieved by 2150. Agricultural subsidies of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries amount to more than $300 billion even while official development assistance devoted to agriculture has been cut by more than 50 per cent over the past decade. Unless the underlying causes of the problem are addressed, including the inherent injustice in the present system, genuine progress will be difficult to achieve;

(e) An investment in the future of children was an investment in peace and security. Increased attention should be given to feeding hungry children and addressing the problems of young people. The interlinked goals of Education for All should be given greater prominence. Similar emphasis should be placed on rights-based approaches to development, universal values and principles in the context of cultural diversities, the International Conference on Population and Development at 10 and Beijing+10 processes, and how they contribute to the Millennium Declaration review, as well as on accessing the need to harness the energy of young people and provide a place for them in the development dialogue;

(f) It should be noted that 70 million more people were living in the world's slums in the three years after the Millennium Declaration was adopted. There will be another 2 billion people living in the world's slums in the next 45 years if no significant intervention occurs. Poverty reduction should encompass urban and rural areas in a seamless development agenda that simultaneously strengthens a country's urban economy and brings agricultural development to rural areas;

(g) The Secretary-General's report should speak not only to Governments but to peoples. It should aim at mobilizing civil society's support around a comprehensive concept of security and a vision of the United Nations role that touches on peoples' lives and engages them in the effort to build a better future for themselves and generations to come.

24. CEB members underscored the enormous political importance of the 2005 high-level event. The opportunity it offered the United Nations system to help shape its outcome should not be missed. HLCP was invited to continue its work on the accountability report, as well as to pursue discussions on the proposal of the Director-General of UNIDO.

25. CEB decided to continue discussions on the focus and priorities of the Secretary-General's report for the 2005 event in the context of the private meeting and revert to issues relating to the review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration at its next session.

B. Information technology: coordinating the policy advice provided to countries and strengthening knowledge management within the system

26. There was limited time to discuss this item and the Secretary-General proposed that CEB revert to the substance of the item at a future meeting, while endorsing the procedural recommendations addressed to it by HLCP and by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (through the High-level Summit Organizing Committee for the World Summit on the Information Society (HLSOC)). The Secretary-General invited meanwhile the President of the World Bank to share his views on the issue of knowledge management, and the Secretary-General of ITU to brief CEB on developments relating to the World Summit on the Information Society.

27. The President of the World Bank underscored the importance of knowledge to the effectiveness of institutions. He had introduced the vision of a knowledge bank in 1996, and by 2001 the World Bank had ranked fourth in the "Most admired knowledge enterprises" award, after General Electric, Hewlett-Packard and Buckman Laboratories.

28. Knowledge management or knowledge sharing at the World Bank was about capturing and organizing systematically the wealth of knowledge and experience gained from staff, clients and development partners; making this knowledge readily accessible to a wide audience internally and externally; and continuing technology investments, including e-business and electronic information exchange with the World Bank's clients.

29. At present, the World Bank had linked 140 countries on its high-speed network and was holding 20,000 videoconferences a year. Such connections allowed World Bank staff members to speed up consultations and decision-making, share knowledge and experiences and conduct business. The Development Gateway listed 100,000 projects and contained various communities of interest.

30. To achieve this was not easy; it was necessary to create the proper perception in people's minds, without which institutions could not be modernized. In particular, staff needed to be convinced of the benefits of posting information on the networks. In addition, some $500 million had been allocated. The President of the World Bank indicated that the organization was ready to help the United Nations develop an appropriate paradigm for knowledge management, based on its experience and lessons learned.

31. The Secretary-General of ITU provided an update on preparations for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held in Tunisia from 16 to 18 November 2005. It was expected that the focus of the Summit would be two-pronged: (a) to provide solutions on how to implement and follow up decisions taken at the Geneva phase of the Summit (Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action) by stakeholders at national, regional and international levels, with

particular attention to the challenges facing the least developed countries; and (b) to complete the unfinished business from the Geneva phase on internet governance and financing. A number of both regional and thematic meetings will be held to prepare for the second phase of the Summit. HLSOC was performing a stock-taking exercise on activities related to the implementation of the Plan of Action.

32. CEB thanked the President of the World Bank for his offer to assist the United Nations in developing an appropriate paradigm for knowledge management and sharing.

33. CEB endorsed the recommendations before it as follows:

(a) HLCP, in close consultation with HLSOC, should undertake a work programme for mainstreaming and integrating ICT into the broader Millennium Development Goals agenda, including through the development of system-wide approaches and guidelines for use by country representatives and by the resident coordinator system; and, working closely with the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) and the ICT network, to focus on developing a clear vision of a United Nations system-wide knowledge management system, its optimum functionality and implementation options;

(b) The United Nations system ICT strategy should be pursued as an essential component of the overall effort to enhance cost-effectiveness, strengthen system-wide knowledge management and enhance the capacity to support countries in using ICT for the achievement of the Goals. HLCM and the ICT network should work closely with HLCP to continue to develop the business cases for the strategy, its resource implications and measures to address constraints in its implementation for consideration and decision by CEB;

(c) CEB members recognize the significance of the information society agenda as a main tenet of the inter-agency work programme, the need to make greater use of new information and communication technologies in the working methods of the United Nations and the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as the importance of these technologies and knowledge sharing as main elements of development policies and as vital tools in achieving the Goals. They agreed to give priority to the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society Plan of Action of the Geneva phase, so that effective results can be reported in time for the second phase; support the involvement of the private sector and civil society in system-wide efforts to build the information society, including through their participation in the Summit process; revert to the reports of the Task Force on Financial Mechanisms and the Working Group on Internet Governance and study their implications for the United Nations system; and continue to assess the impact of new technologies on modern societies and the work of the United Nations system, and strengthen efforts to ensure policy coherence among the agencies of the system, including, in particular, in relation to measuring the digital divide and monitoring e-readiness.

III. Management matters

A. Staff security and safety

34. The Secretary-General indicated that he had submitted a report to the General Assembly, with proposals for a strengthened and unified security management system that would be financed centrally through the regular budget. He regarded security as a core responsibility of Member States and would personally present the report to the Assembly on 1 November 2005 to highlight the fundamental importance of this issue for the future of United Nations operations and activities throughout the world.

35. The Chair of HLCM briefed CEB on the outcome of the Committee's work on the safety and security of staff. The Committee:

(a) Welcomed the proposals of the Secretary-General on a strengthened and unified security management system, including a new organizational structure and approach to financing;

(b) Welcomed the new directorate of security to be established under the proposal, which would ensure a broader scope for staff working on security measures, strengthen the functional capabilities in areas of security threat and risk assessment and provide operational support to the field, including policy and standards, evaluation, training and human resource management of security staff, and operational guidance and technical supervision in other headquarters locations. At the field level, the management function through the designated security official will remain, but the staffing structure will change. The Committee noted that further work will be needed on a number of issues, including governance, implementation strategy, coordination at all headquarters locations, and maximizing partnership and collaboration with the specialized agencies. Under the proposal, the new directorate would not be responsible for security at the headquarters locations of the specialized agencies;

(c) Endorsed the proposed approach to financing (exclusively under the United Nations regular budget) that would do away with inter-agency cost-sharing arrangements. This will be a significant development that would lead to a strengthened and more coordinated security management system.

36. The Chair of HLCM suggested that CEB members should send a clear message to Member States on their strong and unanimous support of the Secretary-General's proposal. Their representatives should endeavour to be present as a show of solidarity when the Secretary-General presents his report to the General Assembly on 1 November 2005.

37. CEB members confirmed full support for the Secretary-General's proposals on the strengthening of the security management system and arrangements for its funding. They considered that their endorsement in the General Assembly would have a major positive impact not only on the sense of security of staff but also on their morale and their capacity to focus and accomplish effectively their work and responsibilities.

38. CEB members raised other security-related concerns that would also require urgent attention. This included the need for a policy on the payment of a security allowance for both international and local or national staff, and their families; the

importance of ensuring that the staff understood that security is not only the responsibility of security officers but also of themselves; and that Member States need to be reminded of the inviolability of United Nations premises and their responsibility for securing them. With respect to the latter, CEB members underscored the need for unity and cohesion among organizations of the system when dealing with host countries on matters concerning security arrangements. There is also the need for organizations of the system to adapt to a changed security environment, in which they may become deliberate targets.

39. CEB welcomed the progress in the work of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network, the outcome of the 2004 census of United Nations system staff members and the situation of contingency planning and emergency preparedness in the organizations of the system.

B. Follow-up to the report of the High-level Panel on the Strengthening of the International Civil Service

40. The Chairman of HLCM briefed CEB on the outcome of the Committee's discussions on the report of the Secretary-General containing the views of the organizations of the United Nations system on the findings and recommendations of the High-level Panel on the Strengthening of the International Civil Service, and on the comments of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) itself on the Panel's report. CEB was informed that HLCM:

(a) Considered and endorsed the Secretary-General's report containing the system-wide comments on the report of the Panel;

(b) Expressed its deep disappointment over the position taken by ICSC on the report of the Panel. This, in the view of the Committee, casts doubt as to the Commission's real commitment to reform and change. With this kind of response from the Commission, improvement and change were not likely to come from within. Any real progress can come only if Member States actually supported the Panel's recommendations;

(c) Expressed the hope that the General Assembly would see the Panel's recommendations as constructive and forward-looking, aimed at enhancing the capacity and effectiveness of the common system.

41. The HLCM Chairman also informed CEB of the presentation she made to the Fifth Committee on 27 October on the report of the Panel, as well as the Secretary-General's report containing the views of the United Nations system on it, and the reaction of the system to the comments of the Commission on the report of the Panel. In that presentation, in addition to the points mentioned above, she emphasized that:

(a) CEB members considered the first eight recommendations of the Panel to be basic reform measures intended to put in place practices that had already been approved in 1998;

(b) CEB members strongly endorsed the strict application of articles 3 and 4 of the ICSC statute to ensure the nomination and selection of truly qualified members of the Commission;

(c) The response of the Commission to the Panel's report was all the more disappointing, given that the ICSC Chairman was an ex-officio member of the Panel;

(d) In view of the Commission's negative response, the reform of ICSC is now entirely up to Member States.

42. CEB members considered that the Commission's negative response to the recommendations of the Panel raised strong doubts about its commitment to reform and change and put into question the value of dialogue with the ICSC Chairman. In the absence of progress in the reform of ICSC, the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system may find it necessary to review their participation in the work of the Commission and the unity of the common system was at risk.

43. CEB members expressed their deep disappointment to the Chairman of ICSC, with regard to the position taken by the Commission on the report of the Panel. In particular, they found it incomprehensible that the Commission would oppose the Panel's recommendations concerning adherence to the ICSC statute and the competencies of its members. Executive Heads also expressed dissatisfaction at the position taken by the Chairman, who as an ex-officio member of the Panel, fully supported its recommendations, but later presided over the Commission's deliberations leading to the rejection of the same recommendations. The Secretary-General requested the Chairman to convey the views expressed by members of CEB to the Commission.

44. **CEB members endorsed the conclusions of HLCM and decided to convey to the Commission their strong disappointment over ICSC comments on the Panel's report and their expectation that the outcome of the General Assembly's discussion would be positive with regard to the key recommendations of the Panel.**

C. Dialogue with staff representatives and the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission

45. The Chairman of ICSC briefed CEB on the work of the Commission, highlighting a number of areas. On the pay and benefits system, he noted that a pilot study of the broad banding and pay-for-performance concepts began (from July 2004) with four volunteer organizations (International Fund for Agricultural Development, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Development Programme and World Food Programme). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as the fifth volunteer organization is undergoing preparatory work, following its decision to participate in the pilot study. For the next three years, the new approaches will be tested and will be closely monitored and supported by the Commission. The Commission was also considering methodologies for determining the level of education grants and the mobility and hardship allowance. Work is expected to continue and will be considered by the Commission in the spring of 2005. The question of separating the mobility element from the hardship element and de-linking both the mobility and hardship allowances from the base/floor salary scale are under review. A working group has also been established comprising Commission members and representatives of the ICSC secretariat, organizations and staff, to develop, among other things, various options

for compensating staff for service at hardship duty stations and for encouraging mobility.

46. With regard to education grant and dependency allowances for staff in the Professional and higher categories, he noted that the Commission's review resulted in an increase only in education grant allowance. The applicability of the Noblemaire principle and the soundness of the current practice of using the highest paid national civil service, combined with a reference check with international organizations, were reaffirmed. On the issue of paternity leave, the Commission approved the granting to a biological father of a reasonable period of leave on the birth of a child. On gender balance, a comprehensive report is under review. The report shows that while limited progress had been made to improve gender balance in the common system, the rate in the advancement of women had slowed down over the years. The Commission has requested its secretariat to provide a progress report in 2006, including on regional representation of women and on organization gender plans and their development, implementation and effectiveness.

47. The representatives of Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) and Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA) presented the views of the staff, highlighting their concern on a number of issues.

- They expressed strong support for the Secretary-General's proposals for a strengthened and unified security management system and will await the reaction of the General Assembly to the new financing approach and its possible implications on other areas of interest to staff.
- FICSA expressed appreciation of the Secretary-General's detailed response to the serious concerns of both FICSA and CCISUA about deployment of civilian staff to Iraq. It remained deeply concerned about the safety and security of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) staff, and the unresolved issue of hazard pay for UNRWA area staff.
- Satisfaction was expressed with HLCM discussions in Rome (5 and 6 October 2004) on more effective ways for staff to communicate with CEB in an effort to enhance the consultative process, but still more needed to be done.
- Concern was expressed over the review of the pay and benefits system and the proposed application of broad banding and pay-for-performance, two concepts deemed by the staff to be totally inappropriate for an international civil service.
- Both FICSA and CCISUA were concerned about recent efforts by ICSC to reform the mobility and hardship schemes at a time when the staff faces increasingly precarious conditions in the field and when mobility is being encouraged by organizations of the system.
- It was noted that the review of contractual arrangements may lead to the end of career contracts in the United Nations system, and FICSA rejected the introduction of contracts that do not safeguard an independent career for international civil service.

- On the review of the strengthening of the international civil service, they supported the recommendations of the High-level Panel on the Strengthening of the International Civil Service. They hoped, however, that there had been more opportunity for dialogue with ICSC and management. They also hoped that the reform of ICSC does not become a cost-containment exercise.

48. In the ensuing discussion, the Chairman of HLCM expressed the hope of having a more dynamic dialogue with staff representatives and thanked them for their support of the proposals of the Secretary-General for a strengthened and unified security management system. **CEB members expressed their appreciation to FICSA and CCISUA for their continuing efforts to promote the interest and welfare of staff and to strengthen their dialogue with CEB.**

IV. Other matters

Dates of the CEB 2005 spring and fall sessions

49. CEB confirmed 8 and 9 April as the dates for its spring 2005 session to be held in Geneva, at the invitation of the Director-General of the International Labour Organization. With regard to the dates of its fall 2005 session, it decided to consult further in the light of its decision to hold its fall session in the last week of October. CEB also took note of the offer of the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization to host the spring 2006 session of CEB in Madrid.

50. CEB paid tribute to Thomas Leavey, Director-General of the Universal Postal Union, whose term in office would end before the next session of the Board and Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, whose term in office ended prior to the current session of CEB.